WEEKLY BULLETIN

August 9, 2026, Vol. 43, No. 31

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Afterfeast of the Transfiguration.

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301
Church Hall: 330-724-7129
Office: 330-724-7009
www.saintelia.com

His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Rev. Deacon Aaron Gray

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2026 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Daniel Ralich
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Reader Daniel Slife
Members: Anastasia Bohush, Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge,

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School:

Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli, Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace, Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Sandy Graham, V. President: Kathy Gray
Secretary: Katherine Hodge, Treasurer: Mary Magensky
Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Deacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers 2026

Sunday, August 9 – Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
: Epistle: Anastasia Bohush
Sunday, August 16 Subdeacon Daniel Slife

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE DORMITION FAST

10th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 1
Afterfeast of the Transfiguration.
Glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska
Saturday, August 8
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, August 9
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Subd. Terrence Bilas
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Anastasia Bohush
Epistle: 1 Cor. 4:9-16 Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

THE DORMITI0N OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY
Friday, August 14
6:00 pm Vigil = Matins and Lamentations
Blessing of Flowers and Herbs
Saturday, August 15
9:00 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 2
Saturday, August 15
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, August 16
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Subd. Daniel Slife
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Subdeacon Daniel Slife
Epistle: 1 Cor. 9:2-12 Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16
For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonored! To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. And we labor, working with our own hands.

Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus have begotten you through the gospel.

Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23
And when they had come to the multitude, a man
came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

Then Jesus answered and said, ***"O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me."*** And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, ***"Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."***

Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, ***"The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up."*** And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

++

GLORIFICATION OF ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA

This Sunday, August 9th, we celebrate the Sainthood of St. Herman of Alaska, the first Saint in North America.

O joyful North Star of the Church of Christ,
guiding all men to the heavenly Kingdom;
teacher and apostle of the True Faith;
intercessor and defender of the oppressed;
adornment of the Orthodox Church in America:
blessed Father Herman of Alaska, pray to our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls

FREE Parish Outing:
An Evening of Outdoor Classical Music

This **Sunday evening, Aug. 9**, the Akron Symphony Orchestra will once again perform a free outdoor concert less than a mile away from St. Elia at Firestone (City) Park. Included this year will be familiar classics from Aaron Copland, George Gershwin, Scott Joplin, and Charles Ives, as well as Akron's own Stephanie Childers-White as guest vocalist for a selection of soulful pops.

Anyone who would like to meet up for an informal parish get-together is welcome. Bring a blanket or lawn chair, and feel free to pack a picnic, and enjoy an evening of music in a relaxed, family-friendly setting. Look for Deacon Aaron and other members of our parish so we can all sit together. No tickets are needed. See you there!

Date: Sunday, Aug. 9
Time: 7:30 to 9 p.m.
Location: Firestone Park Community Center, 1480 Girard Street, Akron

OUR STEWARDSHIP, August 2, 2026

Candles:	**60.00**
Improvement Fund:	**5.00**
Tithely Offerings:	**583.25**
Sunday Tray Offerings:	**2,106.00**
TOTAL:	**$2,754.25**

The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

After the Ascension of the Lord, the Mother of God remained in the care of the Apostle John the Theologian, and during his journeys She lived at the home of his parents, near the Mount of Olives. She was a source of consolation and edification both for the Apostles and for all the believers. Conversing with them, She told them about miraculous events: the Annunciation, the seedless and undefiled Conception of Christ born of Her, about His early childhood, and about His earthly life. Like the Apostles, She helped plant and strengthen the Christian Church by Her presence, Her discourse and Her prayers.

The reverence of the Apostles for the Most Holy Virgin was extraordinary. After the receiving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles remained at Jerusalem for about ten years attending to the salvation of the Jews, and wanting moreover to see the Mother of God and hear Her holy discourse. Many of the newly-enlightened in the Faith even came from faraway lands to Jerusalem, to see and to hear the All-Pure Mother of God.

During the persecution initiated by King Herod against the young Church of Christ (Acts 12:1-3), the Most Holy Virgin and the Apostle John the Theologian withdrew to Ephesus in the year 43. The preaching of the Gospel there had fallen by lot to the Apostle John the Theologian. The Mother of God was on Cyprus with Saint Lazarus the Four-Days-Dead, where he was bishop. She was also on Holy Mount Athos. Saint Stephen of the Holy Mountain says that the Mother of God prophetically spoke of it: "***Let this place be my lot, given to me by my Son and my God. I will be the Patroness of this place and intercede with God for it.***"

The respect of ancient Christians for the Mother of God was so great that they preserved what they could about Her life, what they could take note of concerning Her sayings and deeds, and they even passed down to us a description of Her outward appearance.

According to Tradition, based on the words of the Hieromartyrs Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3) and Ignatius the God Bearer (December 20), Saint Ambrose of Milan (December 7) had occasion to write in his work ***"On Virgins"*** concerning the Mother of God: ***"She was a Virgin not only in body, but also in soul, humble of heart, circumspect in word, wise in mind, not overly given to speaking, a lover of reading and of work, and prudent in speech. Her rule of life was to offend no one, to intend good for everyone, to respect the aged, not envy others, avoid bragging, be healthy of mind, and to love virtue***.

According to Tradition, that from the compiler of Church history Nikēphóros Callistus (fourteenth century), the Mother of God "was of average stature, or as others suggest, slightly more than average; Her hair golden in appearance; Her eyes bright with pupils like shiny olives; Her eyebrows strong in character and moderately dark, Her nose pronounced and Her mouth vibrant bespeaking sweet speech; Her face was neither round nor angular, but somewhat oblong; the palm of Her hands and fingers were longish...

The circumstances of the Dormition of the Mother of God were known in the Orthodox Church from apostolic times. Already in the first century, the Hieromartyr Dionysius the Areopagite wrote about Her "Falling-Asleep." In the second century, the account of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven is

found in the works of Meliton, Bishop of Sardis. In the fourth century, Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus refers to the tradition about the "Falling Asleep" of the Mother of God. In the fifth century, Saint Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem, told the holy Byzantine Empress Pulcheria: ***"Although there is no account of the circumstances of Her death in Holy Scripture, we know about them from the most ancient and credible Tradition."*** This tradition was gathered and expounded in the Church History of Nikēphóros Callistus during the fourteenth century.

At the time of Her blessed Falling Asleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was again at Jerusalem. Her fame as the Mother of God had already spread throughout the land and had aroused many of the envious and the spiteful against Her. They wanted to make attempts on Her life; but God preserved Her from enemies.

Day and night She spent her time in prayer. The Most Holy Theotokos went often to the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord, and here She offered up fervent prayer. More than once, enemies of the Savior sought to hinder Her from visiting her holy place, and they asked the High Priest for a guard to watch over the Grave of the Lord. The Holy Virgin continued to pray right in front of them, yet unseen by anyone.

In one such visit to Golgotha, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Her and announced Her approaching departure from this life to eternal life. In pledge of this, the Archangel gave Her a palm branch. With these heavenly tidings the Mother of God returned to Bethlehem with the three girls attending Her (Sepphora, Abigail, and Jael). She summoned Righteous Joseph of Arimathea and other disciples of the Lord, and told them of Her impending Repose.

The Most Holy Virgin prayed also that the Lord would have the Apostle John come to Her. The Holy Spirit transported him from Ephesus, setting him in that very place where the Mother of God lay. After the prayer, the Most Holy Virgin offered incense, and John heard a voice from Heaven, closing Her prayer with the word "Amen." The Mother of God took it that the voice meant the speedy arrival of the Apostles and the Disciples and the holy Bodiless Powers.

The faithful, whose number by then was impossible to count, gathered together, says Saint John of Damascus, like clouds and eagles, to listen to the Mother of God. Seeing one another, the Disciples rejoiced, but in their confusion they asked each other why the Lord had gathered them together in one place. Saint John the Theologian, greeting them with tears of joy, said that the time of the Virgin's repose was at hand.

Going in to the Mother of God, they beheld Her lying upon the bed, and filled with spiritual joy. The Disciples greeted Her, and then they told her how they had been carried miraculously from their places of preaching. The Most Holy Virgin Mary glorified God, because He had heard Her prayer and fulfilled Her heart's desire, and She began speaking about Her imminent end.

During this conversation the Apostle Paul also appeared in a miraculous manner together with his disciples Dionysius the Areopagite, Saint Hierotheus, Saint Timothy and others of the Seventy Apostles. The Holy Spirit had gathered them all together so that they might be granted the blessing of the All-Pure Virgin Mary, and more fittingly to see to the burial of the Mother of the Lord. She called each of them to Herself by name, She blessed them and extolled them for their faith and the hardships they

endured in preaching the Gospel of Christ. To each She wished eternal bliss, and prayed with them for the peace and welfare of the whole world.

Then came the third hour (9 A.M.), when the Dormition of the Mother of God was to occur. A number of candles were burning. The holy Disciples surrounded her beautifully adorned bed, offering praise to God. She prayed in anticipation of Her demise and of the arrival of Her longed-for Son and Lord. Suddenly, the inexpressible Light of Divine Glory shone forth, before which the blazing candles paled in comparison. All who saw it took fright. Descending from Heaven was Christ, the King of Glory, surrounded by hosts of Angels and Archangels and other Heavenly Powers, together with the souls of the Forefathers and the Prophets, who had prophesied in ages past concerning the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

Seeing Her Son, the Mother of God exclaimed: ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God My Savior, for He hath regarded the low estate of His Handmaiden"*** (Luke 1:46-48) and, rising from Her bed to meet the Lord, She bowed down to Him, and the Lord bid Her enter into Life Eternal. Without any bodily suffering, as though in a happy sleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary gave Her soul into the hands of Her Son and God.

Then began a joyous angelic song. Accompanying the pure soul of the God-betrothed and with reverent awe for the Queen of Heaven, the angels exclaimed: ***"Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee, blessed art Thou among women! For lo, the Queen, God's Maiden comes, lift up the gates, and with the Ever-Existing One, take up the Mother of Light; for through Her salvation has come to all the human race. It is impossible to***

gaze upon Her, and it is impossible to render Her due honor" (Stikherion on "Lord, I Have Cried").

The Heavenly gates were raised, and meeting the soul of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Cherubim and the Seraphim glorified Her with joy. The face of the Mother of God was radiant with the glory of Divine virginity, and from Her body there came a sweet fragrance. Miraculous was the life of the All-Pure Virgin, and wondrous was Her Repose, as Holy Church sings: ***"In Thee, O Queen, the God of all hath given thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. Just as in the Birth-Giving He did preserve Thine virginity, so also in the grave He did preserve Thy body from decay"*** (Canon 1, Ode 6, Troparion 1).

Kissing the all-pure body with reverence and in awe, the Disciples in turn were blessed by it and filled with grace and spiritual joy. Through the great glorification of the Most Holy Theotokos, the almighty power of God healed the sick, who with faith and love touched the holy bed.

Bewailing their separation from the Mother of God, the Apostles prepared to bury Her all-pure body. The holy Apostles Peter, Paul, James and others of the Twelve Apostles carried the funeral bier upon their shoulders, and upon it lay the body of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Saint John the Theologian went at the head with the resplendent palm-branch from Paradise. The other saints and a multitude of the faithful accompanied the funeral bier with candles and censers, singing sacred songs. This solemn procession went from Sion through Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane.With the start of the procession there suddenly appeared over the all-pure body of the Mother of God and all those accompanying Her a resplendent circular cloud, like a crown. There was heard the singing of the Heavenly Powers, glorifying

the Mother of God, which echoed that of the worldly voices. This circle of Heavenly singers and radiance accompanied the procession to the very place of burial.
Unbelieving inhabitants of Jerusalem, taken aback by the extraordinarily grand funeral procession and vexed at the honor accorded the Mother of Jesus, complained of this to the High Priest and scribes. Burning with envy and vengefulness toward everything that reminded them of Christ, they sent out their own servants to disrupt the procession and to set the body of the Mother of God afire.An angry crowd and soldiers set off against the Christians, but the circular cloud accompanying the procession descended and surrounded them like a wall. The pursuers heard the footsteps and the singing, but could not see any of those accompanying the procession. Indeed, many of them were struck blind.

The Jewish priest Athonios, out of spite and hatred for the Mother of Jesus of Nazareth, wanted to topple the funeral bier on which lay the body of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, but an angel of God invisibly cut off his hands, which had touched the bier. Seeing such a wonder, Athonios repented and with faith confessed the majesty of the Mother of God. He received healing and joined the crowd accompanying the body of the Mother of God, and he became a zealous follower of Christ.

When the procession reached the Garden of Gethsemane, then amidst the weeping and the wailing began the last kiss to the all-pure body. Only towards evening were the Apostles able to place it in the tomb and seal the entrance to the cave with a large stone. For three days they did not depart from the place of burial, praying and chanting Psalms. Through the wise providence of God, the Apostle Thomas was not to be present at the burial of

the Mother of God. Arriving late on the third day at Gethsemane, he lay down at the tomb and with bitter tears asked that he might be permitted to look once more upon the Mother of God and bid her farewell. The Apostles out of heartfelt pity for him decided to open the grave and permit him the comfort of venerating the holy relics of the Ever-Virgin Mary. Having opened the grave, they found in it only the grave wrappings and were thus convinced of the bodily ascent of the Most Holy Virgin Mary to Heaven.

On the evening of the same day, when the Apostles had gathered at a house to strengthen themselves with food, the Mother of God appeared to them and said: "Rejoice! I am with you all the days of your lives." This so gladdened the Apostles and everyone with them, that they took a portion of the bread, set aside at the meal in memory of the Savior ("the Lord's Portion"), and they exclaimed : "Most Holy Theotokos, save us".

The sash of the Mother of God, and Her holy garb, preserved with reverence and distributed over the face of the earth in pieces, have worked miracles both in the past and at present. Her numerous icons everywhere pour forth signs and healings, and Her holy body, taken up to Heaven, bears witness to our own future life there. Her body was not left to the vicissitudes of the transitory world, but was incomparably exalted by its glorious ascent to Heaven.

Today flowers are blessed in church,

Please bring your flowers and herbs to the Vigil and Lamentations on Friday evening, August 14, and place them on the table under the Icon of St. Herman for blessing.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 18 AT 6:30 PM

ST. HERMAN'S MEN'S HIKING CLUB
SATURDAY, AUGUST 8 – 900 am
Meeting at WORDEN'S LEDGES
985 Ledge Road, Hinckley, OH 44223
For prayer, fellowship, hiking
Please contact Jefferson Hodge for details:
757-374-3491

PAN ORTHODOX GOLF OUTING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 22
Elsworth Meadows Golf Club
1101 Barlow Road, Hudson, Ohio 44236
Check-in: 12:00 pm
18 holes Tee Off: 1:03 PM - $125 per person
9 Holes Tee Off: 3:18 PM - $85 per person
Sponsored by COCA

PARISH PICNIC: COLUMBIA WOODS PARK
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
Please check for the covered dish sign-up sheet

5K MARATHON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17
IOCC -INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES
St. Elia in conjunction with COCA

REMEMBERING THOSE IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr. Don and Popadia Donna
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Christopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Metropolitan Onuphry of the Ukraine
Metropolitan Theodosy of the Ukraine
Metropolitan Arseny of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Matushka Laryssa Hnntyan
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Matushka Christine Zebren
MatushkaValerie Zahirsky
Florence Lambo
Michele Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Nigilo
Melissa Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Sofia Wsevolodov